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THIRSK  
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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*Annual Report*  
*of the*  
*Medical Officer of Health*  
*for the year 1954.*



# THIRSK RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1954.

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MR. CHAIRMAN & MEMBERS,

I have the honour to present to you my Annual Report for the year 1954.

The period under review has been a favourable one from a Public Health point of view, as apart from a mild epidemic of Whooping Cough in the middle of the year, few cases of Notifiable Diseases were recorded. These never assumed epidemic form and were mostly of a mild nature.

The sewage scheme will be of great benefit to Thirsk and Sowerby and will be followed by others in the Area.

There is a regrettable falling off in the number of cases of Diphtheria Immunisations and at the present rate an epidemic of Diphtheria is possible in the near future.

In my work I have been greatly assisted by our Clerk, the Sanitary Inspector, the Additional Sanitary Inspector and all the other members of the Public Health Staff to whom I record my grateful thanks.

### Public Health Staff.

Clerk	...	...	W. A. Wilkinson
Sanitary Inspector	F. Metcalfe, Cert. R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,		Cert. Meat & Other Foods.
Additional Sanitary Inspector	R. M. Sharphouse, A.R.S.I.,		M.S.I.A., A.I. Hsg.
Medical Officer of Health	W. G. MacArthur, M.B., Ch. B.		
(Part time)			

### SECTION A.

#### Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	71,544
Estimated residential population (Civilians)				
		R.G's figures		14,380
Number of inhabited houses	...	...	...	3,983
Rateable Value	...	...	...	£74,400
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	£308

## Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year.

	Total	Male	Female	
<b>Live Births—</b>	198	114	84	Birth rate per 1,000 of the population 13.62
Legitimate	191	110	81	
Illegitimate	7	4	3	
<b>Still Births—</b>	1	-	1	Rate per 1,000 of all births 5.05.
Legitimate	1	-	1	
Illegitimate	-	-	-	
<b>Deaths registered in the Area</b>	124	79	45	Death rate per 1,000 of the population 8.62
<b>Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age</b>	7	6	1	
Legitimate	5	4	1	
Illegitimate	2	2	-	
<b>Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age</b>	7	6	1	
Legitimate	5	4	1	
Illegitimate	2	2	-	
Death rate of all Infants per 1,000 live births				35.39
Death rate Legitimate per 1,000 legitimate live births				26.17
Death rate Illegitimate per 1,000 Illegitimate live births				285.71
Death from Cancer (all ages) (Headings 10-14 inclusive)				20
Deaths from Measles (all ages) (Heading 8)				Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) (Heading 5)				Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (all ages) (Heading 27)				Nil

## SECTION B.

### 1. Public Health Staff.

See above.

### 2. (a) Laboratory Facilities.

As in previous years this is done for us at the Laboratory at the County Hall, Northallerton, and specimens are also submitted to York for investigation and report.

### (b) Ambulance Facilities.

As before under the control of County Medical Officer. There is a depot at Thirsk which is of great benefit to the locality.

(c) **Nursing in the Home.**

This, with provision for Home Helps is, also under the supervision of the County Medical Officer.

(d) **Clinics and Treatment Centres.**

There are Clinics in Thirsk for general surgery, Ear, Nose and Throat, Obstetrics and Gynaecology and an Eye Clinic.

(e) **Hospitals.**

There is no Isolation Hospital in the Area and since 1948 Hospital administration comes under the York Hospital Management Committee. At Thirsk there is the Lambert Memorial Hospital.

Sections C, D and E are dealt with by the Sanitary Inspector in this Report.

**SECTION F.**

**Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.**

<i>Disease</i>	<i>Total Cases</i>	<i>Admitted to Hospital</i>	<i>Total Deaths</i>
Scarlet Fever	5	2	Nil
Measles	1	Nil	Nil
Meningococcal Meningitis	1	1	Nil
Whooping Cough	28	Nil	Nil
Pneumonia	2	1	Nil

The deaths due to Pneumonia in the table of the causes of Deaths were of unnotified persons.

Puerperal Fever	1	1	Nil
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**Notifiable Diseases during the year.**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Scarlet Fever</i>	<i>Measles</i>	<i>Pneumonia</i>	<i>Meningitis</i>	<i>Whooping Cough</i>
1-2	-	1	-	-	5
2-3	-	-	-	1	1
3-4	-	-	-	-	3
4-5	2	-	-	-	6
5-10	2	-	-	-	12
10-15	-	-	-	-	1
15-25	-	-	-	-	-
25-45	1	-	-	-	-
45-65	-	-	2	-	-
65 & over	-	-	-	-	-

(a) **Prevention of Blindness.**

No action taken by the Council.

(b) **Tuberculosis.**

Age Period	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1-5	1							
5-10	1							
10-15								
15-25	2	2						
25-35				1				
35-45								
45-55	1							
55-65	2	1						
65 & over					1			
	7	3	-	1	1	-	-	-

Most of the Cases of Respiratory Tuberculosis and in some cases of the Non-Respiratory Tuberculosis attend on Wednesdays at the Friarage Hospital, Northallerton.

**Causes of Death in Thirsk Rural District in 1954.**

Causes of Death.		Males	Females
1.	Tuberculosis Respiratory	1	-
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	2	1
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	4	-
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	-	3
14.	Other Malignant & Lymphatic Neoplasms	7	3
16.	Diabetes	2	-
17.	Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	10	8
18.	Coronary disease, Angina	16	6
19.	Hypertension with Heart Disease	1	2
20.	Other Heart Diseases	21	23
21.	Other Circulatory Diseases	2	1
23.	Pneumonia	3	1
24.	Bronchitis	1	3
25.	Other Diseases of Respiratory System	1	-
26.	Ulcer of Stomach & Duodenum	1	-
28.	Nephritis & Nephrosis	3	1
29.	Hyperplasia of Prostate	4	-
30.	Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	-	1
31.	Congenital Malformations	3	-

32.	Other defined and ill-defined Diseases	8	2
33.	Motor Vehicle Accidents	1	0
34.	All other Accidents	1	1
35.	Suicide	3	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		95	56

I am, Mr. Chairman and Members,

Your obedient Servant,

W. G. MACARTHUR,

Medical Officer of Health.

**To the Chairman and Members of  
THIRSK RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.**

MR. CHAIRMAN & MEMBERS,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the work of the Sanitary Inspector's Department for the year 1954.

Mr. Sharphouse has, as your Housing Inspector, submitted his Report in the Section under Housing.

The main feature of the year's progress was the nearing completion of the Thirsk and Sowerby Sewage Disposal Scheme, so removing the gross sewage pollution from the Cod beck which has been such a source of complaint for so many years.

Meat came off the ration in July and although it is an excellent thing to have the meat produced and handled locally for sale to the public, the inspections involved have caused considerable additional work to my department.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Members,

Your obedient Servant,

F. METCALFE,  
Chief Sanitary Inspector & Surveyor.

**Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.**

**Water Supply.**

Practically the whole of the area is now provided with mains water either publicly or privately owned.

The village of Thirlby however still awaits the provision of an improved and adequate water supply.

**Water Samples.**

14 Samples were submitted for examination of which 8 were not fully up to standard and believed due to the heavy rain at the time of sampling.



## **Drainage and Sewerage.**

The Thirsk and Sowerby Sewage Disposal Scheme was nearing completion at the close of the year. Extensive works have been built at Worlds End, Sowerby, and new sewers laid in Thirsk and Sowerby.

The full scheme includes the villages of South Kilvington, Carlton Miniott and Sandhutton, which it is hoped may be proceeded with without undue delay, for existing sewage disposal in these villages is the cause of much complaint. Village tanks are quite inadequate for the treatment of W.C. drainage and each year sees additional W.C's and bathrooms being added on to the sewers.

The demand for improved sanitary and housing conditions calls for the earliest provision of proper sewage disposal and it is to be hoped that on the grounds of public health the schemes already prepared by your Engineers and submitted to the Ministry may have early consent.

## **Closet Accommodation.**

Much of the district is still served by pails or privy middens. There are a large number of pail closets in Thirsk and Sowerby, but with the completion of the new sewage disposal scheme, most of these can now be converted into W.C's.

38 privy middens or pail closets were converted into W.C's during the year and 17 additional W.C's were provided to old property, also 82 W.C's to new houses.

The estimated number of existing closets at the end of the year is therefore :—

Privy Middens	959
Pail Closets	994
Water Closets	1945

## **Public Cleansing.**

This is carried out over the whole of the area, by direct labour, our own men and vehicles being employed.

Dustbins and pail closets are emptied each week, ashpits and privy middens monthly, excepting at isolated houses which are visited on request.

Trade refuse from shops and other business premises in Thirsk and Sowerby is also collected, a small charge being made for this service.

The Market Place, Thirsk, is cleaned up on a Sunday morning and after the weekly Monday Market.

### **Refuse Disposal.**

The collected refuse is disposed of in a disused sandpit by controlled tipping, the Council having purchased a Chase Side Digger for this purpose. This machine has proved a great asset in the proper control of the tip, all refuse being now fully covered, thus tending to prevent nuisance from smell, besides keeping the tip in a tidy, clean appearance and free from fires.

### **Public Conveniences.**

It is proposed to reconstruct the existing block of public conveniences in the Market Place, Thirsk, and provide more commodious and improved premises.

At present they are far too small to meet the ever increasing flow of bus parties into the town, particularly in regard to the women's toilets.

### **Tents, Vans and Sheds.**

There are two licensed Camping Sites in the area and both are for the accommodation of trailer caravans for short periods only.

There are other individual licensed sites which are chiefly used during the summer months for holiday purposes.

### **Sale of Scrap Metal and Marine Store Dealers.**

Six persons were registered for the sale of Scrap Metal, which included four as Marine Store Dealers.

### **Inspection and Supervision of Food.**

Milk. Four distributors of milk were registered by the Council under the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949. Under these Regulations the Council only have control of those persons selling milk by retail and who are not cow keepers.

Eight licences were also granted for the retail sale of designated milks.

Bottled milk is chiefly retailed, much of it produced from farm premises outside the area, the bottled milk being brought in daily by road and the used bottles returned to the dairy for cleansing sterilising and re-filling.

### Meat—Slaughterhouses.

With the decontrol of meat and there being no public slaughterhouse within the Council's area, the re-licensing of existing slaughterhouses became necessary in order to secure sufficient slaughtering accommodation on the ending of meat rationing, and although some of the slaughterhouses were badly situated in being in close proximity to houses, in view of the urgency of the need for adequate slaughtering facilities, it was considered necessary to permit use of same.

11 Slaughterhouses were subsequently licenced, namely 5 in Thirsk and 6 in the district.

One of the Thirsk Slaughterhouses affords slaughtering accommodation for 5 butchers.

30 Slaughtermen's licences were issued.

### Meat Inspection.

1263 carcasses of meat were examined at Slaughterhouses, also 3 carcasses of emergency slaughtered animals at farm premises.

Carcasses examined were :—

Cows 7 ;    Bullocks 286 ;    Heifers 62 ;    Calves 25 ;  
Pigs 353 ;    Sheep and Lambs 530.

### Carcasses and Offal condemned.

* 1 Cow	Septicaemia
* 2 Lambs	Dropsy and Emaciation
3 Bovine Livers	Tuberculosis
2 Bovine Heads and Tongues	do.
2 Bovine Lungs	do.
3 Pig's Heads	do.
5 Bovine Livers	Flukes
3 Bovine Livers	Abscesses
1 Bovine Lungs	do.
1 Bovine Head and Tongue	Lumpy Jaw
1 Pig's Liver	Cirrhosis

\* Emergency Slaughterings.

Good Classes of young, well nourished animals have been slaughtered and the meat offered for sale to the public was of excellent quality.

Meat inspection has been carried out in accordance with the methods recommended by the Ministry of Food and in order to keep up 100% inspections, many evening and early morning visits were necessary, besides Sundays; before the butchers re-adjusted themselves to the decontrol of meat and the need of their customers.

### **Butchers.**

There are 14 butchers in the area, 7 with shops in Thirsk and 5 in the district. Nearly all the shops have refrigerators installed.

### **Other Foods.**

#### **Ice Cream.**

28 premises are registered for the storage and sale of Ice Cream which is sold in pre-packed containers. In only one case is Ice Cream manufactured on the premises, which on all visits have been found in a clean and satisfactory condition.

### **Fried Fish and Chip Premises.**

There are now six of these premises on the register, two being discontinued during the year.

### **Bakehouses.**

There are two factory bakehouses in one of which has been installed special machinery for wrapping the bread as it leaves the ovens.

There are three other small bakehouses which make cakes, etc. only. One bakehouse became redundant during the year.

A considerable amount of bread and cakes are brought into the area from adjoining towns, for retail sale.

Cafes, Restaurants and other premises where food is prepared or offered for sale are kept under supervision.

## Unsound Foods—Condemned.

32 Certificates were issued in respect of preserved foods surrendered by local shops and found to be unfit for human consumption.

## Prevention of Damage by Pests Act.

The Council employ one Rodent Operator on Rodent Destruction throughout this area.

During the year 1,407 inspections and re-visits were made and included dwelling houses 1,354, business premises 41, Refuse tips, etc., 12. 115 inspections were also made of agricultural properties.

The maintenance treatment for rats in sewers was carried out during the year, 56 manholes being test baited with negative result.

## Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Summary of Inspections made :—

Refuse Collection & Disposal	166
Sewers & Sewage	197
Drainage	296
Ditches	9
Complaints	29
Nuisances	112
Public Conveniences	21
Building Byelaws	214
Water Supplies	23
Shops Act	9
Piggeries	6
Tents, Vans & Sheds	23
Factories	13
Petroleum Storage	2
Disinfections	2
Marine Store Dealers, etc.	6
Drains Smoke Tested	21
Miscellaneous	49
Food Inspections	703
Housing	918

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2,819



## HOUSING.

### Council House Building Programme.

The Hambleton Avenue Estate was completed by the end of the year and added a further 74 dwellings to the Council's housing pool.

The types of houses were 32 three bedroomed houses; 16 four bedroomed and 26 two bedroomed flats (both 2 and 3 storied).

Building continued on the East Lea site at Topcliffe during the year and by December the first block of houses was nearing completion. A further contract had been obtained for the building of 12 houses on one of the converted hut sites at Dalton.

Progress continued with the preparation of plans for the re-development of Norby.

The hut dwellings were put out of use as the tenants were rehoused and by the end of the year only 25 families were still in occupation.

### Action under the Housing Acts.

#### Housing Act, 1936.

Owing to the continued shortage of houses the Council was unable to carry out 'Slum Clearance' or large scale housing improvement, and action was confined to cases of individual unfit houses.

Action was taken under Section 11 (Unfit house incapable of repair at reasonable expense) in respect of 14 houses. The result of such action being as follows:—

Closing Orders made	4
Undertakings as to repairs	2
Pending at year end	8

No statutory action was taken under Section 9 for securing repairs, though a considerable amount of housing improvement was carried out, either as a result of informal approach to owners, or due to the incentive offered by the grant provisions of the Housing Act, 1949.

## **Housing Act, 1949.**

The number of applications approved for grants towards the cost of improvements or conversions during the year was 27, of which 11 schemes were completed by the end of the year.

This was the largest number of grants approved since the Act came into force and indicates the increasing advantage being taken of an Act which assists house owners to bring their property up to a standard compatible with that of a modern Council House.

## **Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954.**

This Act came into force in August and provided a new standard of fitness for houses.

The standard removes the necessity for taking into account the building byelaws in determining whether a house is unfit, and by doing so provides a flexible standard more in keeping with present day policy.

The Act also contained provisions whereby owners could increase rents, providing the houses concerned were brought to a proper state of repair. As a result of these provisions one Certificate of Disrepair was issued but had not been revoked at the year end.

## **Housing (Financial & Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1946.**

Three applications for grants towards the cost of farm-workers' houses were received and approved.











